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EASTERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA
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IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff,

v.

KRISTY MARIE TAPP,
aka Kristy Marie Whipp,

Defendant.

CASE NO. **2019 - CR - 227 - MCE**

18 U.S.C. § 1040(a)(2) – Fraud in Connection with a
Major Disaster or Emergency Benefits

INDICTMENT

The Grand Jury charges:

KRISTY MARIE TAPP,
aka Kristy Marie Whipp,

defendant herein, as follows:

I. INTRODUCTION

At all times relevant to this indictment:

1. The Federal Emergency Management Agency, also known as FEMA, was an agency of the United States government within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). FEMA's responsibilities included, among other things, providing disaster assistance to individuals in an area declared a major disaster by the President of the United States of America. The President could declare a major disaster for any natural event that the President determined had caused damage of such severity that it was beyond the combined capabilities of the state and local governments to respond.

2. On or about November 12, 2018, the President of the United States of America declared a major disaster existed in California due to damage resulting from wildfires that began on November 8, 2018. FEMA designates major disasters by name and number. A major disaster declaration number is preceded by the letters "DR." The name of the disaster typically relates to the type and/or location of the disaster. FEMA designated the above identified disaster as: California Wildfires (DR-4407).

3. As a result of this presidential declaration, residents of Butte County who were affected by what has become known as the Camp fire became eligible to apply for disaster assistance from FEMA.

4. FEMA offered various types of disaster assistance to residents in the areas affected by the California wildfires, including through the Individuals and Households Program. The Individuals and Households Program provided financial assistance and direct services to eligible persons in the form of Housing Assistance and Other Needs Assistance. Housing Assistance and some forms of Other Needs Assistance, were available only to an otherwise qualified applicant whose pre-disaster primary residence incurred disaster-related damage.

II. FRAUD IN CONNECTION WITH A MAJOR DISASTER

5. Defendant herein, on or about November 24, 2018, in the State and Eastern District of California, did knowingly make a materially false, fictitious, and fraudulent statement and representation, in a matter involving a benefit authorized, transported, transmitted, transferred, disbursed, and paid, in connection with a major disaster declared under the section 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. § 5170), and where the benefit was a record, voucher, payment, money and thing of value of the United States and of a Department or Agency of the United States; and the benefit was transported in the mail at any point in the authorization, transmission, transfer, disbursement, and payment of that benefit; and the authorization, transportation, transmission, transfer disbursement, and payment of the benefit was in and affected interstate and foreign commerce, that is: the defendant knowingly made a false, fictitious, and fraudulent claim for FEMA assistance in connection with major disaster DR-4407, wherein defendant claimed that at the time of DR-4407, she rented a travel trailer located at 5152 Pentz Road, Paradise, California, that this address was her primary residence, and that she resided at this address with Person 1, age 67, and Person

1 2, age 70, who were her landlords. In truth and fact, the defendant did not reside at 5152 Pentz Road,
2 and that address was not her primary residence. Defendant filed her application for FEMA assistance
3 after the Butte County Sheriff had issued a public notification identifying Person 1 and Person 2, along
4 with their respective ages and city of residence, as deceased victims of the Camp fire. As a result of
5 defendant's claim, she received benefits, including a cash payment of approximately \$3,263.91. All in
6 violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1040(a)(2).

7
8 A TRUE BILL.

9 **/s/ Signature on file w/AUSA**

10 FOREPERSON

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12 McGREGOR W. SCOTT
13 United States Attorney
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United States v. Kristy Marie Tapp
Penalties for Indictment

VIOLATION: 18 U.S.C. § 1040 (a)(2) - Fraud in Connection with a Major Disaster or
Emergency Benefits

PENALTIES: 30 years in prison;
Fine of up to \$250,000; or both fine and imprisonment
Supervised release of at least 5 years up to life

SPECIAL ASSESSMENT: \$100 (mandatory on each count)

No. _____

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

Eastern District of California

Criminal Division

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

vs.

KRISTY MARIE TAPP
aka Kristy Marie Whipp

INDICTMENT

VIOLATION(S): 18 U.S.C. § 1040(a)(2) –
Fraud in Connection with a Major Disaster or Emergency Benefits

A true bill,

/s/ Signature on file w/AUSA

Foreman.

Filed in open court this 12 day

of December, A.D. 20 19

Clerk.

Bail, \$ _____

am - Cline

NO BAIL WARRANT PENDING HEARING